Village Industries Commission is also working as one of the agencies for promoting production and utilisatio'n of bio-gas plants slurry as bio-manure and for conversion of bio-waste into compost and vermiculture. While the use of chemical fertilizers in the country in terms of nutrients N, P & K is presently estimated at 90 Kg. per hectare, use of non-chemical fertilizers, however, is a localised source of supplementary nutrient supply to the corps. As per existing estimates, about 133.8 million tonnes of rural compost and 5.25 million tonnes of urban compost are being used as manure compost. In addition, about 10,000 tonnes per annum of bio-fertilizers are also being used as supplementary nutrients to the chemical fertilizers.

Mega fertilizer plant in Oman

637. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that enormous delay in decision-making by Indian promoters put off the Joint Venture Project with Omanese Government for setting up a mega Fertilizer Plant in Oman;

(b) if so, Government's stand on the latest development of the ill-fated project; and

(c) how the anticipated shortage of Urea is proposed to be tackled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) It had not been possible to take an early decision with regard to Indo-Oman Fertilizer Project on account of the need to restructure the Project in the wake of the fall in international urea prices and the consequent still conditions imposed by the foreign lenders which were not acceptable to the Indian Sponsors of the Project. However, the revised and restructured Indo-Oman Fertilizer Project has since been approved by the Government on 20-6-2000 subject to early resolution of certain outstanding issues.

(c) No shortage of urea is anticipated.

Surplus subsidy to fertilizer manufacturing units

† 638. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain fertilizer manufacturing units had obtained surplus funds from the Government under subsidy during the last few years;

(b) if so the total funds obtained by March 2000 and the names of the units who had received the outstanding funds; and

(c) what steps have been taken by the Government *to* recover the surplus funds of subsidy from these units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (c) The issue of recovery of .surplus funds disbursed under the Retention Price-cum-Subsidy Scheme to the urea manufacturing units in the country is part of the larger issue relating to reassessment of their capacities. The quantum of recoverable subsidy and the names *of* concerned units will depend on the report of the *Committee* of Experts appointed by the Government under the chairmanship of Dr. Y. K. Alagh *vide* Resolution dated i9-5-2000 and Government's decision thereon.

Payment of Retirement Benefits to Ex-Officers

639. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 3661 given in the Rajya Sabha on 28th April, 2000 and state:

(a) the follow up steps taken by the Government for

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.